

# **Center on Child Welfare Policy and Practice University of Wisconsin-Madison**



**PRESENTATION PREPARED FOR THE DCF  
SECRETARY'S ADVISORY COUNCIL**

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# Outline

2

- What is the CCWPP?
- Why was the CCWPP created?
- What are the CCWPP's main objectives?
- How is the CCWPP governed?
- How is the CCWPP funded?
- What's next? Looking to the future

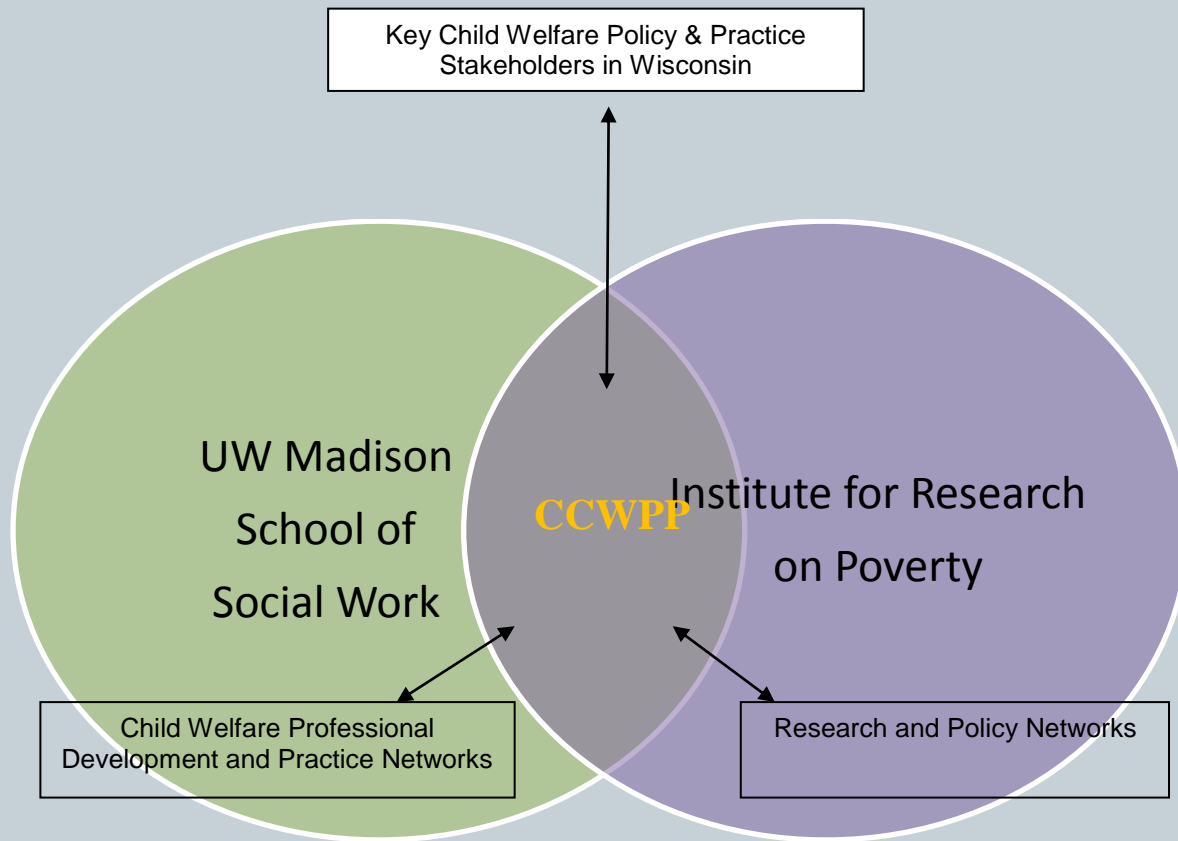
# What is the CCWPP?

3

- A joint initiative of the School of Social Work (SSW) and the Institute for Research on Poverty (IRP)
- Engages in interdisciplinary efforts to create child welfare policy and practice knowledge through enhanced collaboration and communication among researchers, policymakers, and practitioners
- Activities focus on:
  - the development and enhancement of child maltreatment prevention and intervention activities
  - the generation of knowledge to promote family well-being in population involvement or at risk of involvement with public child welfare systems

# Organizational Framework

4



# Why was the CCWPP created?

5

- Build on the strengths of the co-sponsoring institutions
- Maximize the efficient use of available resources
- Provide a structure for:
  - Stakeholders to request assistance with research and technical assistance needs
  - Researchers to propose research activities that stand to benefit child welfare stakeholders in Wisconsin
  - Ongoing identification of research topics that stand to benefit child welfare practice in Wisconsin
  - Ensuring integration of research into social work curriculum

# School of Social Work

6

- **History**
  - Long history of educating child welfare professionals
  - Since 2000, MSW Title IV-E Training Program
  - 2010, expanded IV-E Program to BSWs and Part-time MSW
- **Funding**
  - UW-Madison, Department of Children and Families, public and private grants to individual researchers
- **Key strengths**
  - Core group of faculty with child welfare and prevention research expertise
  - Integration of state-of-the-art child welfare research into social work curriculum

# Institute for Research on Poverty

7

- **History**
  - Created in 1966 during the War on Poverty to support basic research and training as well as evaluation of anti-poverty policy
- **Funding**
  - IRP core infrastructure funded by U.S. DHHS and the UW-Madison
  - Research projects funded by grants and contracts from foundations and state and federal agencies
- **Key strengths**
  - Multidisciplinary faculty affiliates and staff with expertise in a wide range of research methods
  - Substantial administrative data management and analysis capabilities (IRP Data Core)
  - Strong ties with policymakers and practitioners in governmental as well as non-governmental settings

# What are the CCWPP's main objectives?

8

- **Conduct and disseminate rigorous research**
  - Contribute to and synthesize the body of child welfare research
  - Translate this knowledge to those vested in reducing the incidence of child maltreatment and improving the circumstances of children and families served by the child welfare system
- **Ensure state-of-the-art academic curriculum**
  - Support the delivery of a research-based curriculum at the Social Work Bachelor's and Master's levels
  - Support the delivery of a multi-disciplinary training component for doctoral students
- **Enhance technical assistance provision**
  - Ensure that partnerships with key public and private stakeholders are coordinated



# Research Examples

9

- **Child Support Referral for Families Serviced by the Child Welfare System**
  - Project designed to track the frequency, consistency, and timing of orders to pay child support for formerly custodial parents who children have been removed from their care and analyze the relationships between orders, payments, and reunification
- **Subsidized Guardianship Demonstration Evaluation**
  - Milwaukee County random assignment experiment that allowed (primarily kin) foster caregivers to consider subsidized guardianship as a permanency alternative to adoption, unsubsidized guardianship, and long-term foster care
- **Integrated Data Systems Project**
  - Project to enhance the use of administrative data for program management and evaluation. Includes integration of data on child welfare services, TANF, SNAP, MA, child support, UI wage and benefit records, and Corrections data
- **Milwaukee Community Response Project**
  - Milwaukee County random assignment experiment to test the preventive impact of providing economic support assistance to families referred to CPS, but screened out after initial assessment.

# Technical Assistance Examples

10

- Assist private and governmental agencies with grant writing
- Advise these entities on evaluation strategies (e.g., design, analysis)
- Advise on implementation issues with respect to new policies and practice initiatives
- Advise on development and implementation of cross-systems initiatives

# Training Examples

11

- Bi-annual lectures and workshops by national child welfare experts
- Policy-practice-research conferences focused on child welfare topics
- Certificate programs and workshops for practitioners in child welfare (macro practice, evaluation)

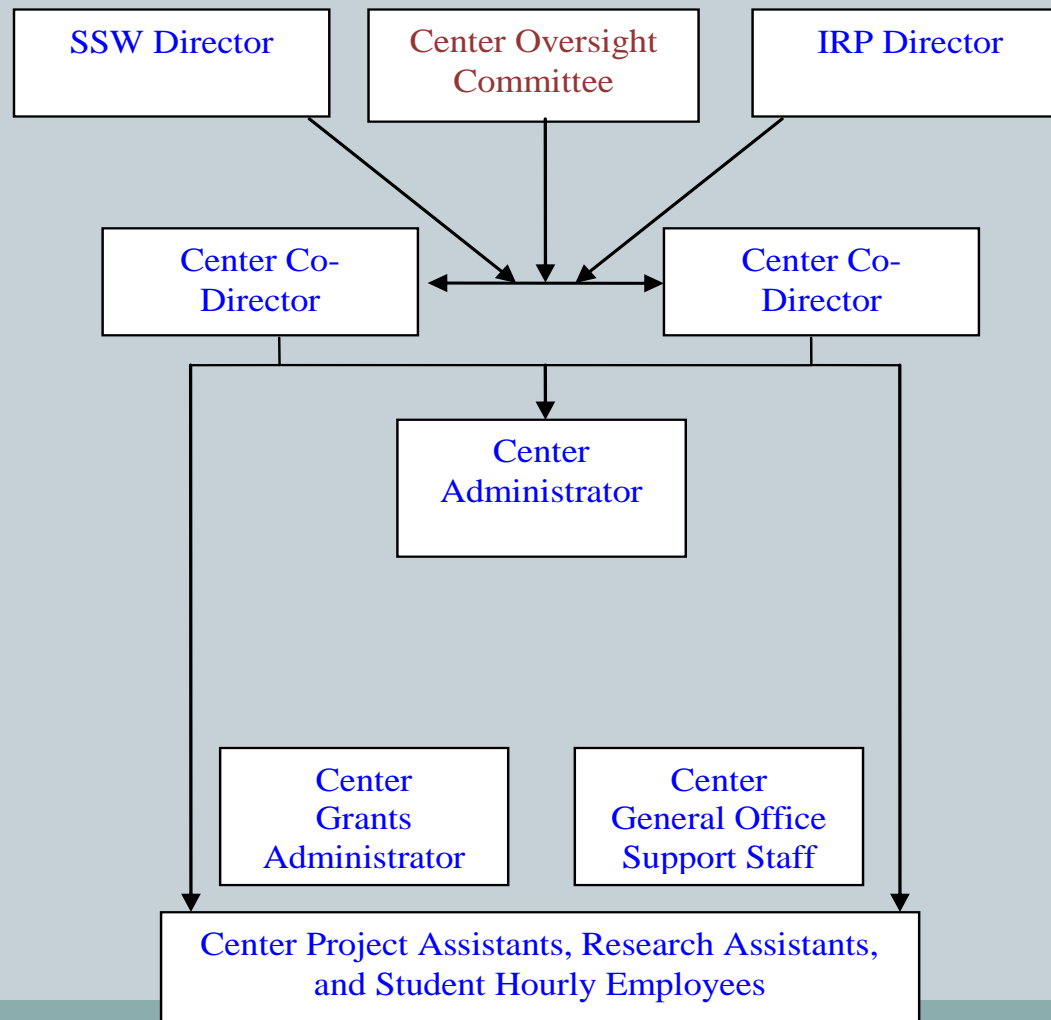
# How is the CCWPP governed?

12

- **Co-Directors**
  - Represent SSW and IRP
  - Appointed by Directors of SSW and IRP
- **10 Member Center Oversight Committee**
  - IRP and SSW Directors (2)
  - CCWPP Co-Directors (2)
  - UW-Madison faculty or academic staff (2)
  - Department of Children and Families representative (1)
  - Helen Bader School of Social Welfare representative (1)
  - External stakeholders with a record of policy or direct practice experience in the Wisconsin child welfare arena (2)

# Long-Term Organizational Structure

13



# Funding

14

- Currently, no independent funding
- Start up costs underwritten by the two sponsoring institutions
- Infrastructure funding will be pursued
- Individual research projects to be funded by grants and contracts from foundations and local, state, and federal agencies

# What's Next? Looking to the Future

15

- **Organizational issues**
  - Formation of Center Oversight Committee
  - Development of core infrastructure funding
- **Activities in support of objectives include developing:**
  - Annual research agendas informed by multiple stakeholders
  - “Quick response” capacity to meet DCF requests
  - Website for disseminating research syntheses and status and results of research projects in Wisconsin
  - Doctoral training grant emphasizing prevention (in collaboration with UWM)
  - Research and technical assistance briefs